

Drinking Water Information

If you own or operate a drinking water system serving a not-for-profit seniors' residence...

As an owner/operator of a stand-alone drinking water system that serves a not-for-profit seniors' residence, there are a number of requirements you must meet in order to comply with Ontario's Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 170/03). In the regulation, not-for-profit seniors' residences are identified as designated facilities serving a susceptible population. The regulation strengthens the protection of populations that are less resistant to pathogens and contaminants in drinking water. Some of the most sensitive are senior citizens in not-for-profit seniors' residences.

A "not-for-profit seniors' residence" means a home for the aged, a residence for seniors or retired persons, or any other similar residence, where attainment of a mature age is a factor in being accepted for occupancy. The residence must not be operated for commercial purposes.

The information in this fact sheet will help you determine if your seniors' residence is required to sample, test and treat your water according to the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation.

If these requirements apply to you, this fact sheet will summarize the steps you must take to meet your responsibilities under the regulation.

Seniors' Residences connected to municipal or other regulated systems

If you are connected to, and your water comes directly from, a municipal system or other drinking water system that is regulated under O.Reg. 170/03 and meets the testing and treatment requirements of this regulation, and all the piping in your seniors' residence is plumbing under the building code, then the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation does not apply to your seniors' residence, and nothing is required of you. Municipal and other regulated drinking water systems must meet stringent requirements under the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O.Reg.170/03) to ensure that the water supplied to the homes and other buildings connected to the system is safe.

Seniors' Residences Using Transported Water

If all the water used by your seniors' residence is transported from a drinking water system that is regulated under O.Reg. 170/03 and meets the treatment and testing requirements of this regulation, then you may be exempt from treatment, operational checks and micro/chemical tests if you test for chlorine residual daily or provide alarmed, non-chlorine-based primary disinfection equipment. Refer to Section 7 of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation to determine if this exemption does apply to your system.

Seniors' Residences that must meet the testing and treatment requirements

If your seniors' residence is not connected to or does not receive transported water from a regulated system, you should follow the steps summarized on pages 3 and 4. You should also refer to a more detailed kit that is available at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4427e.pdf or you can obtain it by calling 1-800-565-4923.

Drinking water systems serving not-for-profit seniors' residences were required to start sampling and testing water by **June 1, 2003**. In addition, drinking water systems serving not-for-profit seniors' residences were required to install treatment equipment by **July 1, 2004**, no matter the category of drinking water system your system may fall into. The actions you must take to meet your responsibilities under the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation are summarized on pages 3 and 4.

Note: Depending on the category of regulated, non-municipal system that is serving the seniors' residence, you may have different treatment, sampling, testing frequency and reporting requirements.

- Refer to *A Kit for Regulated Non-Municipal Drinking-Water System Owners* to determine the category that your system falls into. You can obtain this kit at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4427e.pdf or by calling 1-800-565-4923.
- If your drinking water system only serves a seniors' residence (and no other building, facility or residence), you are most likely a small, non-municipal, non-residential system and **this fact sheet applies to you**.
- If you determine that your category of drinking water system is Non-Municipal Year-Round Residential; Large Non-Municipal Non-Residential; or Non-Municipal Seasonal Residential, refer to *A Kit for Regulated Non-Municipal Drinking-Water System Owners* for details of your responsibilities.

Maintaining your well

If your source of water is groundwater, you must also properly maintain your well to protect the groundwater supply.

Well owners are responsible for any wells on their property, so it is important that you understand the rules and what you can do to make sure your well is properly constructed and maintained. Ontario's Wells Regulation (O.Reg.903 under the **Ontario Water Resources Act**) as amended in August 2003, sets out new standards for well construction, location and abandonment that must be followed by well owners and the contractors they hire to construct, repair or seal a well.

To learn more about these standards, please refer to the ministry's website www.ene.gov.on.ca for fact sheets on:

- water well construction
- the protection of water quality in drilled wells
- the protection of water quality in bored or dug wells
- the protection of water quality in jetted and driven point wells

However, to be certain your well is in compliance, you should review Ontario's Wells Regulation. This can be viewed on the Ministry of the Environment web site at www.ene.gov.on.ca. You can obtain a print copy by calling the ministry's Public Information Centre at 1-800-565-4923. You may also want to consider hiring a licenced well contractor to conduct an inspection.

Please remember that this fact sheet is provided for guidance only. For a complete understanding of your responsibilities as a drinking water system owner you must refer directly to the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation.

For the most up-to-date fact sheets, a kit explaining your responsibilities in more detail and for copies of the regulation, check the Ministry of the Environment's website at www.ene.gov.on.ca or call the Public Information Centre at 1-800-565-4923.

Steps for Compliance with O. Reg. 170/03 Requirements for a Drinking Water System Serving a Not-For-Profit Seniors' Residence

Step 1: Register your drinking water system

- To register your system, go to the Drinking Water Information System (DWIS) at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm and follow the online instructions.
- Once you have registered, you will be sent an email with your drinking water system number, category, user name and password, usually within one to two business days.
- While the Ministry of the Environment requires electronic submissions of information, you may be authorized to make paper submissions under special circumstances. Please call 1-866-793-2588 for more information about paper submissions.

Step 2: Select a licenced laboratory(ies) to analyze your drinking water samples

- Provide the Ministry of the Environment with information about the licenced laboratory(ies) you will use to analyze your drinking water samples by filling out a *Laboratory Services Notification Form*, which is available on DWIS at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- A list of laboratories that are licenced by the Ministry of the Environment to carry out drinking water testing services is available at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/sdwa/licensedlabs.htm

Step 3: Sampling and testing requirements

- It is your responsibility to know and meet the sampling and testing requirements applicable to your system.

Microbiological sampling and testing requirements are:

Raw Water Samples	At least once a month
Distribution Samples	Once every week
• if not chlorinating or chloraminating	
• if chlorinating or chloraminating	Once every 2 weeks

A series of acceptable results over 24 consecutive months may allow you to reduce the frequency of sampling.

Chemical sampling and testing requirements vary depending on the parameter.

Review Schedule 15 of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation for the requirements. The regulation is available at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/sdwa/legislation.htm or by calling 1-800-565-4923.

Chemical Sampling and Testing Requirements cont.

If you have already taken tests for chemical parameters under O. Reg. 495/00 or O. Reg. 505/01, then the next set of tests required are based upon the required frequency dating back to the original set of tests. If no tests were previously taken under O. Reg. 495/00 or O. Reg. 505/01, then you had until June 1, 2004 to carry out these tests.

Nitrate and Nitrite (beginning Sept. 1, 2003).	at least once every 3 months
Sodium and Fluoride	At least once every 5 years
Lead	At least once every 5 years
All organic and inorganic parameters listed in Schedules 23 & 24 of O. Reg. 170/03	At least once every 5 years

- The way you collect and transport your drinking water samples affects the accuracy of your test results. It is critical that drinking water samples are collected and transported as specified by the laboratory(ies). For more information on collecting drinking water samples, refer to *A Kit for Regulated Non-Municipal Drinking-Water System Owners*. You can access the kit online at www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4427e.pdf or you can order a print copy by calling 1-800-565-4923.

Step 4: Have a “trained person” adjust equipment and conduct operational checks (depends upon the category that your system falls into)

- Ensure that a “trained person” performs all necessary adjustments to the water treatment equipment and conducts any required operational checks (e.g. chlorine or turbidity tests).
- The “trained person” designation is obtained through completion of a Director-approved course every three years. More information is available at: www.oetc.on.ca or by calling 1-905-796-2851.

Step 5: Have an engineering evaluation report completed and submit written notice to the Ministry of the Environment

- Hire a professional engineer with experience in sanitary engineering to prepare your engineering evaluation report on the installation of treatment equipment or following an alteration to your system.
- Names of some service providers are available at: www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4222e_appendix.htm
- The engineering evaluation report was due 30 days after the following treatment deadline:

- **July 1, 2004 for all systems serving not-for-profit seniors' residences and within 30 days of an alteration to your system.**
- Submit written notice to the Ministry of the Environment within 7 days of receiving the report using an *Engineering Evaluation Report Notice* available on DWIS at:
www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- Do not submit the report to the Ministry of the Environment. Keep it on file and make it available upon request.

Know your Minimum Treatment Requirements

- Primary Disinfection for groundwater sources.
- Filtration and Primary Disinfection for surface water sources.

Step 6: Applying for full relief from requiring any treatment

- You can only apply for full relief from treatment requirements if your drinking water system relies on a groundwater source. Your engineering report should include this information.
- Consult with the users of the system and with your local Medical Officer of Health, then summarize comments and responses.
- Submit the summary and provide written notice to the Ministry of the Environment using the appropriate application. Refer to the *Guide for Applying for Approvals Related to Municipal and Non-Municipal Drinking-Water Systems* at:
www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/4467e.pdf

Step 7: Notify authorities of adverse test results and other problems

- As soon as you become aware of an adverse test result, or if you observe that your drinking water system is not properly disinfecting water that is being directed to users, immediately contact your local Medical Officer of Health AND the Ministry of the Environment Spills Action Centre (SAC). SAC can be reached at 1-800-268-6060.
- Submit written notice to both of the above authorities within 24 hours using the *Written Notification of Adverse Water Quality Incident* form available on DWIS at:
www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- Submit written notice to the ministry and the local Medical Officer of Health of action taken and results achieved within 7 days after the issue is resolved using the *Written Notification of Adverse Water Quality Incident* form available on DWIS at:
www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- You must also report by speaking in person or by telephone, and delivering a written notice to the operator of the seniors' residence that is served by the

system (unless you are both the operator of the seniors' residence and the owner of the drinking water system).

Step 8: Take corrective action

- Refer to Schedule 18 of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation for the actions you must take following adverse test results or other problems.
- Where required, post warning notices in prominent locations where they are likely to be seen by those using water from the system.
- Warning notices must be posted at every entrance to every building and every structure that is part of the seniors' residence.
- If you are the owner of the drinking water system but do not own the seniors' residence, you must ensure that the operator of the seniors' residence is provided with:
 - sufficient copies of the warning notices
 - instructions to post the warning notices.
- Obtain Ministry of the Environment-approved warning notices by calling 1-800-565-4923.

Step 9: Submit an annual report

- The Drinking-Water Systems Regulation requires that all regulated drinking water systems submit an annual report.
- Submit the report to the Ministry of the Environment using the *Annual Report* format available on DWIS at:
www.ene.gov.on.ca/environet/DWIS/index.htm
- A copy must also be given to the seniors' residence.

Step 10: Make information available to the public

- Keep copies of the following reports on site, and make them available on request, free of charge, during normal business hours:
 - Annual reports for the last 2 years
 - Engineering Evaluation Reports for the last 2 years
 - All required test results, approvals and orders issued for the last 2 years
 - A copy of the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 170/03)

If you would like more information, please contact the Ministry of Environment's Public Information Centre at: 1-800-565-4923.

You may access all the documents, including the Drinking-Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 170/03) and all DWIS notices and reports at: www.ene.gov.on.ca